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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
09/775,265	02/01/2001	Paul Clark Blalock	BY15/33313-U	7230
24350	7590	06/27/2005	EXAMINER	
			JARRETT, SCOTT L	
		ART UNIT		PAPER NUMBER
				3623

DATE MAILED: 06/27/2005

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

<b>Office Action Summary</b>	<b>Application No.</b>	<b>Applicant(s)</b>	
	09/775,265	BLALOCK ET AL.	
	<b>Examiner</b>	<b>Art Unit</b>	
	Scott L. Jarrett	3623	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

#### Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 1 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

#### Status

1) Responsive to communication(s) filed on May 9, 2005.

2a) This action is FINAL.                    2b) This action is non-final.

3) Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

#### Disposition of Claims

4) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are pending in the application.

4a) Of the above claim(s) 27-64 is/are withdrawn from consideration.

5) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are allowed.

6) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are rejected.

7) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ is/are objected to.

8) Claim(s) \_\_\_\_\_ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

#### Application Papers

9) The specification is objected to by the Examiner.

10) The drawing(s) filed on \_\_\_\_\_ is/are: a) accepted or b) objected to by the Examiner.  
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).  
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).

11) The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

#### Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

12) Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).

a) All    b) Some \* c) None of:

1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

\* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

#### Attachment(s)

1) Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)

2) Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)

3) Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date \_\_\_\_\_

4) Interview Summary (PTO-413)  
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. \_\_\_\_\_

5) Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)

6) Other: \_\_\_\_\_

**Notice of Non-Responsive Amendment**

1. The reply filed on May 9, 2005 is not fully responsive to the prior Office Action because of the following omission(s) or matter(s): Newly submitted claim 27-64, claims 1-26 being canceled, directed to at least two inventions that are independent or distinct from the invention originally claimed for the following reasons:

The originally filed claims, claims 1-26 (Group I), were directed to the negotiation of transportation contracts, specifically contracts for transportation lanes classified in class 705 subclass 8. In sharp contrast to the newly submitted claims 27-64 (Group II) wherein claims 27-57 (Group III) being directed to the auctioning of transportation services, with no mention of contracts or transportation lanes, classified in class 705 subclass 26 and claims 58-64 being directed to a generic multiple-level auctioning classified in class 705 subclass 26.

The Inventions are distinct, each from the other because of the following reasons:

Inventions I and II are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as awarding transportation lane contracts. The subcombination has a separate utility such as auctioning one or more of a plurality of transportation services. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions I and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are

shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention I has separate utility such as awarding transportation lane contracts. The subcombination has a separate utility such as auctioning transportation lanes in a multi-level auction marketplace. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Inventions II and III are related as subcombinations disclosed as usable together in a single combination. The subcombinations are distinct from each other if they are shown to be separately usable. In the instant case, invention II has separate utility such as auctioning one or more of a plurality of transportation services. The subcombination has a separate utility such as auctioning transportation or other business goods/services in a multi-level auction marketplace. See MPEP § 806.05(d).

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and have acquired a separate status in the art as shown by their different classification, restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Because these inventions are distinct for the reasons given above and the search required for Groups I, II or II are not required for Groups I, II or III restriction for examination purposes as indicated is proper.

Since applicant has received an action on the merits for the originally presented invention, this invention has been constructively elected by original presentation for prosecution on the merits. Accordingly, claims 27-64 are withdrawn from consideration

as being directed to a non-elected invention. See 37 CFR 1.142(b) and MPEP § 821.03.

Subsequently there are no remaining claims to be examined.

See 37 CFR 1.111. Since the above-mentioned reply appears to be *bona fide*, applicant is given **ONE (1) MONTH or THIRTY (30) DAYS** from the mailing date of this notice, whichever is longer, within which to supply the omission or correction in order to avoid abandonment. EXTENSIONS OF THIS TIME PERIOD MAY BE GRANTED UNDER 37 CFR 1.136(a).

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Scott L. Jarrett whose telephone number is (571) 272-7033. The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Friday, 8:00AM - 5:00PM.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Hafiz Tariq can be reached on (571) 272-6729. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SJ  
6/23/2005



TARIQ R. HAPIZ  
SUPERVISORY PATENT EXAMINER  
TECHNOLOGY CENTER 3600